

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 20, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States Capitol  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Minority Leader  
United States Capitol  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

We write to urge a swift and strong response to the actions of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC oil producing countries (collectively, OPEC+) this month, including bringing up H.R. 2393, the *No Oil Producing and Exporting Cartels Act (NOPEC) Act* for a vote and taking other Congressional action to respond to the unwarranted actions of OPEC+.

As you know, OPEC+ was formed in 2016, with a group of non-OPEC countries joining OPEC in efforts to coordinate their oil production in order to better control global oil prices and protect their own financial interests. That group of non-OPEC countries was led by Russia, which wields significant power within OPEC+ as the joint-largest oil producing nation in the group, tied with Saudi Arabia.

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, OPEC+ announced that they were cutting oil production quotas for their member countries by 2 million barrels per day. This caused oil prices to increase, hurting our constituents who are now faced with the prospect of even higher gas prices, and helping Russia's ability to continue to finance its unprovoked war in Ukraine. This action by OPEC+ show a clear choice to place the interests of Russia, Saudi Arabia and others ahead of the United States of America.

Nor, we should be clear, is this the first time OPEC and OPEC+ have taken such an action. After American shale oil production saw dramatic growth last decade, OPEC, with the support of Russia, responded. Between 2014 and 2016 these same actors took clear steps to harm American oil producers and limit America's goals of energy independence. The repercussions from the price war OPEC and Russia began linger, with numerous domestic oil producers and energy investors reluctant to actually increase production for fear of being caught in a similar situation. We have and continue to support American energy independence through an all of the above strategy and believe that OPEC+'s opposition will only get stronger the closer we get to an energy future that is no longer reliant on dirtier and less reliable foreign sources of energy.

We believe this latest action from OPEC+, which obviously strengthens Russia in its war with Ukraine and hurts Americans through higher prices, clearly demonstrates this organization is working counter to American interests and does not deserve special protections from our antitrust laws. There is little question that if a group of companies took similar steps of coordinating how much oil they would each produce and sell, they would be in violation of federal antitrust laws. Given that, and that both Saudi Arabia nor Russia, the two largest producers in OPEC+, are working against American interests both at home and around the world, we believe there is no reason to provide special protections for OPEC+.

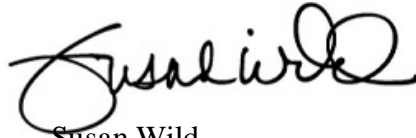
We would strongly urge you to bring up the *NOPEC Act*, led in the House by Rep. Chabot and in the Senate by Sen. Grassley for a vote, and work to get this bill and other legislation to restrain the power of OPEC+ signed into law swiftly. We believe their actions have worked counter to American interests for several years now, and this most recent announcement is the last straw. The time is now to restore the balance in this relationship, and we will continue to work to curb the power of Russia and Saudi Arabia to hurt our constituents.

Sincerely,



Cindy Axne

Member of Congress



Susan Wild

Member of Congress